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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

National Intelligence Council

NIC #03128-85

18 June 1985

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence  
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM:

Assistant National Intelligence Officer for Europe

SUBJECT: "Greens" In East Europe--The New Opposition?

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1. We are beginning to see some signs that the traditional issues driving the opposition in East Europe--political alienation, economic grievances, suppressed anti-Soviet nationalism and desires for autonomy--may be given new impetus as existing opposition groups get involved in environmental causes. The latter issues might have significant impact because:

- A major accident in any of East Europe's Soviet-designed nuclear energy plants could involve several contiguous East European countries as well as non-Pact neighbors--like Yugoslavia, Austria, and Sweden--and major allies like the FRG.
- Since the war, all the East European regimes have pushed rapid industrialization without much concern for environmental side-effects or adequate health protection for workers. (The already evident pollution comes from older, smoke-stack industrial plants--many of Soviet design or origin.) Now, Eastern Europe's boom years are gone and the burden of past debts will make it difficult for them to rapidly undo errors by retooling with safer, cleaner plants.
- As the environmental movement gets off the ground, it could complicate plans to expand reliance on nuclear power as an alternative to declining conventional energy resources from the USSR. (Today, fourteen nuclear plants, built under CEMA's INTERATOMERGO program, are operational and by 1990 another

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thirteen plants will be on line. Ten of the older plants now in use are decidedly below US standards in design safety but there are no known plans to take them off line.)

2. The pollution issue will likely be difficult to contain. The authorities' efforts at suppression would put them in the posture of stifling a group with immense appeal at home and among leftists in the West.

- The leaders of the Green movement in West Germany have already anticipated the rise of an environmental cause in the East and offered support and sympathy to traditional opposition groups--in East Germany, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia.

- [redacted] environmentalists in Budapest had joined forces for the first time with more traditional opposition groups in calling for a boycott of national elections in early June. The regime ignored the challenge, in part, we think, to protect its good reputation with the West European left. (Visits by Labor leader Kinnoch and Willi Brandt were in the offing.)

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3. We stress that the issue has not yet caught fire in a big way--although it would rapidly do so in the event of a major disaster or a series of smaller incidents with high visibility. For now, awareness levels in East Europe differ widely. East German environmentalists, who have the easiest access to the Greens in the FRG, apparently are far in front. The Hungarians and the Yugoslavs, judging by rising concerns evident in the press, are beginning to catch up. Some more recent reporting we have noted would include:

- Comments in a Die Presse interview by the Mayor of Belgrade last fall that the Danube's radioactive contamination level increased sharply after Hungary opened a second stage of its Paks nuclear plant last August.

- [redacted] claims that Slovenian farmers protested on 17-20 March over plans for nuclear waste storage from the Krsko power plant at a site designed for more limited useage.

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- Press reports from Belgrade which have linked Petra Kelly to a new domestic dissident group opposing a mammoth dam project on Montenegro's Tara river.

- [redacted] the Kadar regime has interceded with Prague urging it to reconsider a major dam project which would uproot a perfectly preserved seventeenth century Hungarian

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village in Slovakia. (Nationalist dissidents in Hungary are using the issue to generate support for their claim that the Czechoslovaks are trying to eradicate all traces of the minority.)

4. We may soon be hearing more from Czechoslovak environmentalists about their grievances.

-- [redacted] there was a serious accident with injuries during the run-up of a nuclear power plant at Dukovany this spring.

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-- [redacted] tailings from uranium mining in northern Czech lands is polluting whole valleys and contamination is beginning to seep into the Elbe where it flows into East Germany.

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5. For now we are proposing to explore cross-disciplinary aspects of the environmental question with the proper DDI offices.

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